

Optimizing Google Classroom for Student Fulfillment

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Abstract

In recent years, Google Classroom has become one of the most widely used learning platforms, especially since online learning began to be widely implemented. This study attempts to explore how Google Classroom can be maximized to support students' learning process more effectively. Through direct observation, interviews with teachers and students, and a review of the use of its features, it was found that this platform actually has great potential. When used appropriately. For example, to share materials, give assignments, and open discussion spaces. Google Classroom can help students learn in a more structured and independent way. Even so, challenges remain, especially regarding uneven internet access and lack of technical understanding among teachers. From this it can be concluded that optimizing Google Classroom is not just about technology, but also about readiness and comprehensive support from various parties.

Keywords: *Google Classroom; Technology Optimization; Digital Education; Learning Platform; Online Learning*

1. Introduction

Advances in technology and information in Indonesia continue to accelerate from year to year. These changes are inevitable, given the increasingly complex human needs and their impact on various sectors of life, including education. In the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, digital literacy is very important, especially for teachers who are now required to be able to follow technological developments in teaching activities. Therefore, understanding of technology—based learning systems—such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) - needs to be improved so that the teaching and learning process can take place more creatively, actively, and innovatively [1]. In practice, teachers are expected to master the technology and convey it to students in an interesting way so that learning does not feel monotonous. Moreover, the use of technology is proven to increase student motivation in learning. That way, schools are encouraged to utilize digital technology as part of their obligations in providing educational services that are relevant to the Times [2].

The implementation of LMS is very important, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic which limits direct teaching and learning activities. In this situation, online learning is a solution so that teachers can still carry out the task of educating students. The policy of the Minister of Education and Culture number 4 of 2020 and the Secretary General's Circular Number 15 of 2020 are the foundation for the implementation of learning in this emergency period. One of the widely used platforms is Google Classroom, which makes it easy for teachers to organize materials, share assignments, provide feedback, and communicate with students flexibly without space and time restrictions [3]. However, continuous online learning without adequate infrastructure support or parental involvement can pose a variety of challenges. Although the pandemic will not last forever, schools still need to adapt. One solution is to apply the blended learning model, which is a combination of face-to-face learning and online learning [4].

From the results of interviews with several teachers, it was revealed that many of them wanted to use the LMS in learning, but still found it difficult to implement it. In addition, they also experience obstacles in understanding the character of students if they only rely on online meetings. In this case, the home visit method can be an alternative to bridge these limitations. With the cooperation between teachers and parents, the learning process becomes more meaningful even in pandemic [5]. Learning with a blended learning approach is considered more effective, efficient, and targeted. This method allows the learning process to take place both online and face-to-face, both individually and in small groups [6]. Nevertheless, there are still many obstacles found in the field, such as less stable internet access or complaints from parents because they have to accompany children to learn online that interfere with their routine. Therefore, learning will be maximized if applied blended. Basically, blended learning is a combination of direct learning and online learning [7]. This approach provides space for teachers to develop in the teaching process and helps students become more independent. Based on these conditions, cooperation between schools and Partners is needed to take advantage of technological advances through training. Hopefully, with the optimization of Google Classroom-assisted blended learning, teachers can improve the overall quality of learning.

2. Research Methods

The training, which is part of the community service program, was held at the Ngres state elementary school hall and involved members of the KKG (teachers ' working group) and several teachers from other elementary schools in the Trenggalek Sub-District. The event lasted for four days with 20 participants. The training is divided into two main parts: the first two days are focused on providing material about the concepts and theories of using Google Classroom LMS, while the next two days are used for hands-on practice, both using devices and computers. Participants are trained to understand their role in the system—both as teachers and as students. In addition to the introduction to technology, participants were also introduced to the home visit method, which can later be applied in small groups as an alternative to learning. The main objective of this training is to encourage increased understanding of technology among teachers, while strengthening the quality of learning both during the pandemic and in the aftermath. Hopefully, this activity can provide an experience that builds a collaborative spirit between teachers and students. This Program is intended for educators and staff of school operators who are members of the Ngres state elementary working group. The Activity phase starts from the preparation, including determining the location and participants, followed by the implementation phase which includes methods such as lectures, interactive discussions, and direct practice of using Google Classroom from two perspectives: teachers and learners.

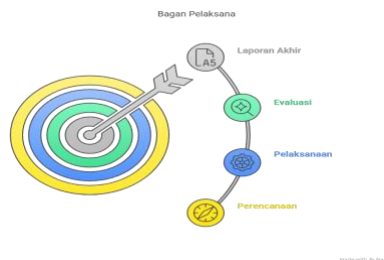


Fig. 1: Community Service Implementation Chart

3. Result and Discussion]

Blended learning learning Model when applied optimally is expected to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process by educators. On the other hand, learners will also be more helped in following learning in the midst of the volatile COVID-19 pandemic conditions. The balance of the role of educators in learning activities can be achieved if blended learning is combined with the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Google Classroom, which is then integrated with the home visit method as a form of face-to-face learning. Google Classroom is an alternative solution that supports the implementation of blended learning because it is part of the G Suite for Education Service that can be accessed for free Susanti & Prameswari. The implementation of this training is the result of collaboration between SDN Ngres and STKIP PGRI Trenggalek. During the activity, the educators showed high enthusiasm to learn the material presented, which was packaged through lecture methods, question and answer sessions, and hands-on operation of the web-based Google Classroom application. This is in line with the view of Hidayat et al. which states that a person's understanding of a material can be improved through explanation first, followed by discussion, then followed by practice as an indicator of understanding. The increase in motivation from teachers looks even stronger when they are introduced to the features owned by Google Classroom, although most of them are not used to using this type of LMS. This is due to the lack of ongoing training or mentoring in the previous SDN Ngres environment which aims to improve the quality of learning. Blended learning is essentially an innovative learning model that allows all students to access and absorb the material to the fullest. This Model combines elements of electronic learning (e-learning) with face-to-face learning in person, thus providing a more effective and efficient learning experience through the combination of two different learning environments. In the material delivery session, the trainees were shown various examples of Google Classroom page views, as well as given a technical explanation of the LMS operational steps in detail

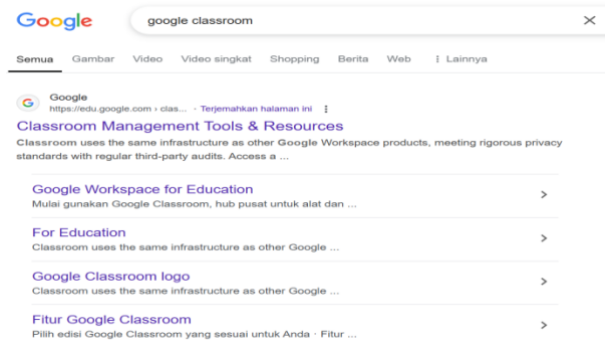


Fig. 2: Search Engine

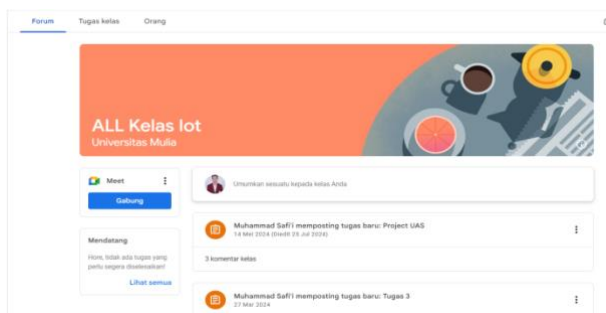


Fig. 3: Discussion Forums & Assignments

This training activity directs participants directly in making classes through Google Classroom starting from the initial search using the Google search engine. After that, participants are directed to determine the class and set the content of the material in accordance with the theme of learning that has been designed. Adjustments are made based on the relevant learning substance at each meeting. Participants also practiced adding students to the classroom online, using two main methods as proposed by Salamah: first, by sharing the invitation link; second, through a copy of the link directly integrated in the Google Classroom Site. In the next stage, teaching materials are uploaded to be accessible to students without time restrictions. For materials that are not yet understood, students can take advantage of the discussion forum feature to interact directly with teachers. After the discussion session is over and the students understand the material, the next step is to give assignments that can be done, uploaded, and assessed directly through the Google Classroom page. The entire training process was carried out for four full days, because time constraints could hinder participants' understanding of the operation of Google Classroom LMS to the fullest.

The implementation of blended learning or combination learning model requires intensive assistance during the implementation process. Sofiana (2015) states that there are six important components that need to be considered:

- 1.Consistency in the delivery of material so that students understand the information provided
- 2.Seriousness in the implementation of combination learning
- 3.State-of-the-art teaching materials in both content and format
- 4.Allocation of learning time with a ratio of 75% online and 25% face-to-face
- 5.25% time allocation is given specifically for students who have difficulty understanding the material online
- 6.Discipline and continuity in managing time and attention so that there is an increase in the understanding of learners, which ultimately has an impact on improving the quality of learning by educators.

The series of training activities began with the provision of theoretical and conceptual material related to blended learning through lecture methods on the first two days, followed by direct practice on the third and fourth days. Practical material is relayed in a general way as a reminder of what has been discussed previously. During the practice session, the resource person assisted directly to monitor the progress of the participants. On the third day, some teachers already understand the operation of Google Classroom, while others still need guidance. Resource persons with the team provide briefings gradually to strengthen the understanding. On the fourth day, all trainees have demonstrated mastery of classroom management in Google Classroom, including managing materials, assignments, and assessment processes. The assessment feature in the Google Classroom LMS displays the student's identity in detail such as name, profile photo, date and time of assignment collection, and type of assignment given. In addition, teachers are facilitated in managing and presenting the assessment results of each meeting session systematically. Setyaningsih & Hidayat states that the range of values used in this system is 0 to 100. Teachers can also quickly identify students who have not collected assignments or who are late through the tracking feature on the platform. In the training process, participants who have difficulty are placed in small groups with participants who already understand the material, to facilitate collaborative learning between peers. The success of this training can be seen from the ability of participants—especially teachers—in operating the Google Classroom LMS thoroughly.

This includes the ability to create classes, manage materials, check student assignments, provide grades, and deliver feedback effectively (Suryadi et al., 2020).

4. Conclusion

The active participation of all participants in the blended learning model optimization training based on the Google Classroom Learning Management System (LMS) is expected to be the foundation in supporting the improvement of the quality of online learning, both during the pandemic and afterwards. Primary school teachers in the teachers' working group (GGG), along with principals and school operators, have demonstrated the ability to operate Google Classroom LMS across the board—from digital classroom creation to managing learner evaluation outcomes. The service activities carried out directly provide a meaningful experience for participants, especially in terms of increasing understanding of the implementation of blended learning-based learning with the support of Google Classroom. This understanding is an important foundation in facing the challenges of digital learning in the era of educational transition.

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